

City of Mesa
Zoning Board of Adjustment
57 E. First Street, Lower Level
Mesa, Arizona 85211

Re: REQUEST TO AMEND MESA SOUTH COMPREHENSIVE SIGN PLAN
STARBUCKS COFFEE – 1238 S. GILBERT ROAD
BOA17-00214

Proposal:

Starbucks Coffee, by YESCO, LLC, hereby requests a Special Use Permit in modification of the Comprehensive Sign Plan known as Mesa South. This Starbucks, a new freestanding development site, has recently been addressed 1238 S. Gilbert Road, and is to be located on Parcel 139-08-457A between Mi Amigos and the Circle K. The property is zoned LC. Several modification requests are addressed herein, specifically: that Starbucks be allowed a monument sign on Gilbert Road; that Starbucks be allowed a third wall sign; and that Starbucks be allowed to install “can or cabinet style” logos on its walls.

Monument Sign:

The Mesa South CSP provides for five monument signs on Gilbert Road, three monument signs on Southern Avenue, and one monument sign on Hampton Avenue, for a grand total of nine monument signs. These numbers appear to exclude the two monument signs permissible for the Circle K Corner parcel, which are referenced separately in the CSP. Currently, Gilbert Road has five monument signs, Southern Avenue has three monument signs, and Hampton Avenue has zero monument signs, for a grand total of eight monument signs on the property; nine if the Circle K sign is included (Circle K has opted for one corner fuel monument, rather than the two it might otherwise have been allowed by CSP or Code.)

480-449-3726 » Office

6725 W. Chicago Street
Chandler, AZ 85226

AZ Contractor's License No. ROC260958
L-1, ROC260959 L-38, ROC260960 L-3

Mesa South Center spans 1250 feet on Gilbert Road. As noted, there are five non-Circle K monument sign currently in place on Gilbert Road. In order, from South to North, they are: Carls Jr. (22.6 square feet sign area, 7.58' in height); Bike Snow (18 square feet in sign area, 5.58' in height); National Bank (20.64 square feet in sign area, 8.17' in height); Mesa South tenant pylon (83.31 square feet in sign area, 12.83' in height); and Mi Amigos (47.68 square feet in sign area, 10' in height.) All of these signs are located within the southernmost 700 feet of the Gilbert Road frontage. Starbucks and its proposed monument sign are slated to be located in the northernmost 500 feet of the Gilbert Road frontage: the closest monument sign to the South will be Mi Amigos at a distance of 264 feet, the closest sign to the North will be Circle K, at a distance of 314 feet. See Branding Book, page S16 and Sign Inventory.

Starbucks has over 180 feet of frontage on Gilbert Road. Based on this, it would be entitled by code to a 9 foot high, 40 square foot monument sign (one foot of sign height per 10 feet of frontage = 18 foot height allowance. One square foot of sign area allowance per lineal foot of street frontage not to exceed 80 square feet = 80 square feet allowance. Allowances x 50% = 9 feet height allowance and 40 square foot sign area allowance.) Regardless, Starbucks has taken a minimalistic approach to its requested double-face monument sign, opting to request an 8' monument sign with a 14 square foot sign area. Because the installation terrain drops 22 inches from grade, the appearance will be closer to that of a six-foot sign when viewed from the street.

In all respects, the request for monumental signage on Gilbert Road conforms with the current Mesa Sign Code: the Starbucks monument sign will be located more than 50 feet from any other monument sign; it is less than 9 feet in height and 40 SF in area; it is designed to have a base of metal or masonry construction; the base width is more than half of the height of the sign; and it incorporates design features associated with the Starbucks elevations. I have attached a rendering of the building that can be compared to the monument design proposal that illustrates the marriage between the two: the composite wood siding of the south portion of the building has been incorporated on the monument as a wood veneer; the "stepped," multi-level appearance of the building elevations has been duplicated in the structural design; and the colors match those found on the building.

Mesa South was granted extensive sign area and height allowances in its CSP, which was approved in 1981. Two tenant pylons, each at 35 feet in height and 230 square feet in sign area, were provided for, whereas the existing two tenant pylons stand at 12.83 feet and utilize 83.31 square feet of sign area. Put in perspective, the tenant pylons for the site were entitled a total of 70 feet in height and 460 square feet in sign area: they used only 25.66 feet in height and 166.62 square feet in sign area. The remaining three center signs were entitled by Code to reach as high as 30 feet in height and 300 square feet in sign area, for a combined total of 90 feet in height and 900 square feet in area. However, the remaining monument signs on site clearly fall short of these provisions: the combined total in height is 43.67 feet; the combined total in sign area is 155.52 square feet. I would note that I had our surveyor measure the height of each sign from ground level rather than from grade, which indicates that the height allowances utilized are even less if measured according to Code.

Finally, all of the tenant panel positions on the existing Center signs are occupied by other tenants (but for one small panel at the bottom of the Southern Avenue pylon that is hidden by a bush). Without its own PAD monument, Starbucks will have no curb-side presence to notify potential customers of its locus. For these reasons, Starbucks respectfully requests that this modification request be granted, and that it be permitted to install the proposed monument sign as presented in its Branding Book.

Wall Signs:

The Mesa South CSP takes no definitive position on the number of allowable wall signs, but instead states: "The shopping center has been designed to provide a sign band on each of the buildings for use by our merchants. All signs shall be on the sign band and comprised of individual letters: "can" or "cabinet" type signs are not permitted." See Section 1(E) of the Mesa South CSP.

As previously noted, this Starbucks is a new building to be constructed in 2018, and thus was not contemplated in the existing CSP. Three sign bands have been designed on this building: on the north elevation, on the south elevation, and on the east elevation. These positions are clearly visible to north and south bound traffic; the eastern elevation sign provides storefront identification. The building frontage is 86.5 feet on its eastern face, which would allow Starbucks the maximum 160 square feet of signage. If the Sign Code were applied, Starbucks would be permitted two wall signs.

However, as with the monument sign, Starbucks has chosen a minimalistic approach to its request for building sign area: 22.86 square feet on its south elevation; 22.86 square feet on its north elevation; and 34 square feet on its east elevation, for a total of 72.3 square feet of building signage – less than half of that permissible by Code. Because Starbucks will sit a substantial distance from the buildings on either side, its North and South walls provide ideally-elevated exposure to traffic from both directions. In favor of requesting signage on its storefront and the North, South and East elevations, Starbucks has elected to leave its West elevation devoid of signage. Its request, therefore, is that the three sign bands illustrated in its Branding Book be recognized in amendment to the CSP, and that Starbucks be allowed to distribute its proposed signage on three elevations within the noted sign bands.

As part of its minimalistic approach, Starbucks has also chosen to forego the opportunity to install “Starbucks” channel letters in favor of its classic and trademarked Starbucks Siren round logo. These are traditionally, as here, combined with directional cabinet signs where a drive-thru is present. Other examples of cabinet or “can” signs are located on the Southern Manner property (see Carl’s Jr., Zia, etc.) As previously noted, the proposed cabinet signs match the Siren logo found on the proposed monument sign, and will lend a sleek, understated signscape to the building. Starbucks respectfully requests modification to permit these the cabinet signs as proposed.

REQUIRED FINDINGS:

1. Mesa Zoning Ordinance (MZO) 11-41-8.D.13:

The MZO requires a finding that one or more of the following three criteria have been met in order to authorize a Comprehensive Sign Plan or modification in excess of the permitted height, area and number of signs specified by Code:

- a. *The development site contains unique or unusual physical conditions, such as topography, proportion, size, or relation to a public street that would limit or restrict normal sign visibility.*

Starbucks elected to set its building back an additional three feet from that required by Code (from the required 15’ to 18’). As a function of this, the preserved parking area for Starbucks fronts the building on Gilbert Road, which allows for the drive-thru lanes to wrap around the back of the building (facing into the shopping center). As a result, a screen wall will need to be built as a shield along Gilbert Road, potentially limiting the visibility of the building from traffic lanes. The proposed monument sign, located between a center entrance to the south and Southern Avenue to the north, will give location awareness that will allow potential customers to consider and adjust to available entrances on

Gilbert Road and Southern Avenue in a timely fashion. Similarly, distribution of wall sign allowances between three signs rather than two will provide the visibility that is necessary for a new location to thrive.

- b. The proposed or existing development exhibits unique characteristics of land use, architectural style, site location, physical scale, historical interest, or other distinguishing features that represent a clear variation from conventional development.*

Does not apply.

- c. The proposed signage incorporates special design features such as logos, emblems, murals, or statuary that are integrated with the building architecture.*

The proposed monument sign incorporates the trademarked Siren logo and drive-thru chevron that mirrors those signs proposed for the building walls. Additional details of the sign show architectural and design features that are directly related to the building: all colors are drawn from the approved palette of the building, and incorporated is the wood siding that is a central feature of this custom build. The structure itself mirrors the articulation of faces and materials of the building which creates a visual interest on different planes.

2. MZO 11-70-5.E:

The MZO requires the Board of Adjustment to make affirmative findings on each of the following criteria in order to grant a Special Use Permit:

- a. Approval of the proposed project will advance the goals and objectives of and is consistent with the policies of the General Plan and any other applicable City plan and/or policies;*

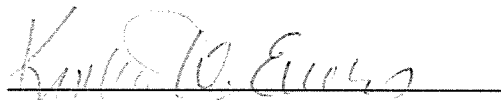
Starbucks believes this project meets the Guiding Principles of the Mesa 2040 General Plan by creating a visually appealing set of building and signage designs for what is now an underutilized expanse of parking lot in the Mesa South Center. It will create a modern and elegant focal point for the Center and be compatible with, not detrimental to, adjacent properties and the neighborhood in general.

- b. The location, size, design, and operating characteristics of the proposed project are consistent with the purposes of the district where it is located and conform with the General Plan and with any other applicable City plan or policies;*

This project falls within LC zoning and is surrounded by like commercial properties. Starbucks has created superior custom designs for this building and its signage that will refresh an aging development and provide the potential for a newly expanded customer base to visit the Mesa South Center. As previously noted, the design of the signs is consistent in material with the architecture of the building: the signs are complimentary to the development and consistent with the use of the property. The proposed monument sign is also of a proportionate size to blend with monument signs already found on the property. The entirety of the sign package proposes less sign area and height than permissible by Code, and is well-suited to the building and lot size of this Starbucks development.

Landlord approval has been provided for all of the above-referenced requests. The building design coupled with the proposed signage choices, both wall and monument, will provide a handsome and contemporary establishment to refresh Mesa South's Gilbert Road frontage. For all of the above reasons, we respectfully request that modification to the Mesa South CSP be granted, and that Starbucks be granted a special use permit to install signage as per the proposed Branding Book.

Respectfully Submitted:

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Kimberly W. Euers", is written over a horizontal line.

Kimberly W. Euers

Government Relations

YESCO, LLC